

Application No.: 10/052,356

Docket No.: 22197-00009-US

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-16 are pending. Claim 2 was canceled in a previous response.
Claims 1 and 11-13 are amended.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 11-13 have been amended to clarify that the retainer is arranged to engage a pipe that is pushed into the housing of the coupling/pushed within the coupling. Support for this added language is found, for example, in the second paragraph of specification page 6. Although Applicant believes that the claims were allowable as previously submitted, this language has been added to the claims in order to expedite prosecution. Claims 1, 11, and 12 have also been amended to replace the terms "adapted to" with the terms "arranged to" in order to more positively recite the structure of the coupling. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3-5, 7-10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chambers et al. (US 5,406,983).

Chambers et al. disclose a screw-in coupling that is specifically adapted for use with high temperatures and pressures, and harsh environments. The intended use of the Chambers et al. coupling is entirely different from that of the coupling of the instant application, and, accordingly, the materials used in the Chambers et al. coupling differ greatly from those used in Applicant's coupling.

The retainer of Chambers et al. is a screw thread and therefore is not able to retain a pipe that is *pushed into the housing or pushed within the coupling* as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 13.

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Additionally, the Examiner has identified element 12 of Chambers et al. as being a housing of relatively rigid plastics material. However, item 12 is a stress bearing sleeve, and is preferably made of steel, iron, aluminum or high performance composites of glass or ceramic.

Furthermore, the Examiner has referred to the composite shell (26) of Chambers et al. as being equivalent to the claimed deformable material that forms a seal with a conduit. However, the shell (26) is clearly not deformable, especially not to such an extent as to provide any form of sealing. Chambers et al. describe the shell as being a fiber-filled polymeric composite (column 5, line 43) of high modulus of elasticity, high tensile strength and high compression strength (column 4, lines 4-5). Such a material could not fairly be considered to be deformable due to the harsh environment in which it is adapted to function, and due to the fact that it must support a thread.

For the above reasons, Chambers et al. simply does not teach the invention set forth in claims 1, 3-5, 7-10 and 13.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 3-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Petty et al. (US 4,923,227) in view of Chambers et al.

Petty et al. disclose a corrugated pipe connector having retainers and suggests that a sealing material could be added to the internal surface of the body in the region where the end of a pipe abuts a shoulder in the fully inserted position. Petty et al. do not teach or even suggest a deformable material on the outer surface of the housing as set forth in the present claims.

The teachings of Chambers et al. are discussed above. For the reasons stated above, the shell (26) of Chambers et al. is clearly not deformable, especially not to such an extent as to provide any form of sealing. Thus, Chambers et al. also do not teach or suggest a deformable material on an inner and outer surface of the housing. As both Petty et al. and Chambers et al. lack the teaching or suggestion of a deformable material on an inner and outer surface of the

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housing, claims 1 and 3-16 are not obvious in view of the combined teachings of Petty et al. and Chambers et al.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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